GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2577
ANSWERED ON:16.03.2007
PARTHASARTHY COMMITTEE ON WATER CRISIS
Murmu Shri Hemlal;Shakya Shri Raghuraj Singh

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received the report of Parthasarthy Committee on water crisis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the main recommendations made therein;

(d) whether it is possible to overcome the water crisis with the help of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) as per the report;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government for implementation of the recommendation in toto ?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU)

(a), (b) & (c): Yes, Sir. The Parthasarthy Committee on watershed programmes has submitted its report to the Ministry on 31.3.2006. The main recommendations of the Committee are listed in the Annexure.

(d) & (e): The Committee has suggested for an increased investment of Rs.10,000 crore per annum in the unified National Watershed Programme to complete the treatment of rainfed/degraded areas in a time frame of 15 years. Since, National Rural Employment Gurantee Scheme (NREGS) also primarily includes watershed related activities of soil and water conservation, the Committee has suggested that 50 percent of the total annual investment need should be met from NREGS budget as additionality.

(f) : The recommendations of Parthasarthy Committee have been analyzed in depth by the Ministry. The Government has set up a National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) for policy support to the watershed programme. An initiative is underway to develop a common set of guidelines for watershed development programmes interalia keeping the recommendations of the Committee in view.

Annexure

Annexure referred to in reply to para (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2577 due for answer on 16 .03.2007

(i) An increased thrust to rainfed areas through greater emphasis on a reformed, more intensive and improved watershed development programme for meeting the food and water security in future.

(ii) Increased investment in watershed programme and convergence with National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

(iii) Setting up a National Authority for Sustainable Development of rainfed Areas (NASDORA) as a quassi- independent authority to manage the entire primarily Central Government funded watershed programmes under one umbrella with a view to implementing them on a Mission Mode.

(iv) In line Institutional Structures to NASDORA at State, district and block levels to ensure complete coordination in effective delivery of programme , and at village level Watershed programme may be executed and implemented by the Village Watershed Committee (VWC) as a standing committee of the Gram Panchayat (GP).

(v) The project period may be increased from 5 years to 8 years and divided into three phases - preparatory phase of 2- year, second phase of resource augmentation and institution building of 4 year, and the third phase of sustainable Livelihoods and productivity enhancement of 2-years.

(vi) The per-year per hectare norm of Rs. 1500.

(vii) A separate monitoring agency under NASDORA for social, physical and financial audit of the programme.

(viii) Ensuring social and economic equity and benefits from public land to landless and dalits, having them organized in Self Help Groups (SHGs) and federations for effective marketing of produce.

(ix) Clear prioritization of objectives- drinking water and protective irrigation, along with fodder and fuel must come first.

(x) A package of sustainable dry land agriculture practices must be mandatorily incorporated into the watershed programme for reducing demand and regulating end- uses.

(xi) Livestock management, animal husbandry, dairying fisheries and other land-based activities must be integrated in watershed development programmes.